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SPECIAL ISSUE

THE CARBONDALE UFO CRASH The Reality, the Hoaxes and the Legend

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THE WELL-PUBLICISED Kecksburg, Pennsylvania UFO crash of 1965 has been touted as "Pennsylvania's Roswell" and presented as a crash recovery story that has been shrouded in a veil of mystery and governmental conspiracy which is intended to keep the truth of the incident from the American people. But, Lackawanna County's city of Carbondale, Pennsylvania is also the location of a "downed saucer incident" that has caught the imagination and interests of ufologists and conspiracy enthusiasts throughout the nation. 9-11 November 2004 marked the 30th anniversary of Pennsylvania's other Roswell incident. - the legendary Carbondale UFO crash or perhaps, I should call it "The Carbondale UFO Capers".

As one of the three primary UFO investigators of the Carbondale saucer crash, I feel that it is time for me to present my recollections and reflections on this occurrence, as well as some thoughts on how and why the legend of the ill-fated Carbondale UFO has become a gleaming facet of contemporary ufological folklore. So, let me start my story at the beginning.

I was working quite late on the night of 10 November 1974 (on a design project) and had sketches and blueprints scattered about on the dining room table and floor. It was a little after midnight, (actually 11 November) and I had been



August, 1975 *MEN* magazine depiction of The Carbondale UFO incident. The magazine's article, "Pennsylvania's Mysterious UFO / Lantern " was written by Jim Payson, with the illustration created by Bruce Minney.

listening to a local radio talk show when the programme's host suddenly announced that his programme director had just handed him a note about an unidentified flying object which had apparently crashed at Carbondale, Pennsylvania.

Since I had appeared on WWDB's Bernie Herman show several times discussing the UFO phenomenon, I phoned the station without hesitation and asked if the matter was legitimate or simply a prank. Both the show's host and his engineer assured me that the report was indeed "authentic" for they had just taken it directly from an Associated Press release.

I then contacted the Carbondale police department about the situation and spoke to a desk officer who told me that an airborne object had been observed by a group of five teens (but only three of the youngsters actually participated in our inquiry of the sighting), and that the UFO

apparently plummeted into a pond and sank. The youngsters agreed that a fiery object had fallen to earth in a shower of sparks and splashed down into a large coal breaker pit or 'silt pond', as it was called by locals.

The police had cordoned off the area in an attempt to keep curiosity seekers from possibly getting injured at the site, as two areas of the bank of the pond were rather steep and slippery. The acting

police chief, Sgt Francis X. Dottle, confided that he didn't know what the object in the water was, but that he and a couple of his men had observed it glowing while submerged on the night of 9 November - and that it remained aglow until the wee morning hours of 10 November (i.e. for a period of about six to eight hours).

As I later learned, the teens who observed the phenomenon saw a fiery object streak across the sky, "Coming over Salem Mountain" in the direction of Russell Park. According to the boys, they ran into the park from their street corner location where they were just hanging around on a "nothing else to do" Saturday night and discovered a strange light glowing in the pond about twenty feet from shore. The boys had run about two blocks to the pond and didn't actually see or hear the object hit the water. There was

a faint "fizz" or sizzling sound heard, however, and one of the lads said that "it sounded like someone had thrown a cigarette in the water." So, too, one boy thought the pond had an odour "like gas from a gas stove", while another boy said that "the pond just smelled like it usually does".

The mysterious airborne object was described as being bright whitish-yellow in colour with a trail of reddish sparks. It was estimated to appear about as large as a five cent piece (a nickel) held at arm's length. But one of the boys would later say that it was about "three times the size of a basketball". No sounds were noted by the teens as the object appeared to fall towards the earth, and they didn't see a trail of smoke coming from it either. One boy said, "It looked like a shooting star". However, later versions of the story credit the boys with saying the object whistled as it sped earthward.

The boys left the pond to report the submerged light to the police about 7:00 p.m. and when they returned to the pond (around 15 minutes later) they thought that the light had taken up another position in the water, although no one actually saw the light moving at that time. The light was described as being yellow-orange in colour by two of the boys, while the third witness described it as "yellowish, almost white". The light on the water's surface appeared as an irregular disc about 5 feet in diameter. While several UFO researchers would later describe it as being an irregular shaped glow at 20 feet in diameter, I performed a very simple experiment with a flashlight in a darkened room and discovered that the central portion of the light's beam appeared to be about five feet in diameter (when directed at the ceiling) and its outer, fainter, and more widely dispersed light beam was about 4 times larger. This may account for the discrepancy in the estimates concerning the diameter of the glow on the pond's surface - or perhaps, the later researchers may have misinterpreted the boys' statements regarding the "position" of the light from shore, which was initially reported to be about twenty feet.

I asked the officer on the phone if the object might have been a small private plane, fearing that someone may have been trapped in an air-pocket within the fuselage's wreckage. He said that the reports indicated that the object's

tremendous speed and the lack of floating debris on the water seemed to deny that possibility. I then asked if the object could have been some sort of "space junk" and informed him that there were military tracking installations such as NORAD that should be contacted in regard to the situation. My primary concern was that if the object were some part of an American or Soviet spacecraft or satellite which hadn't completely burned up as it re-entered the Earth's atmosphere, there may have been a possibility that some portion of its electrical system was still being powered by the "snap units" (or nuclear batteries) that were used to power various on-board instrumentation and guidance systems.

This seemed to be highly improbable, but, then again, there was that strange light beneath the pond's surface, a light which appeared to pulsate with diminishing intensity and at one point suddenly rushed towards a small boat which police had launched to further investigate the matter. But, unknown to me at that time, Sgt Dottle (the Acting Police Chief) had already been in contact with Dr J. Allen Hynek's Center for UFO Studies in Evanston, Illinois about the situation.

Dr Hynek advised Sgt Dottle that a meteor or a meteor fragment could not be the source of the light in the pond because burning meteors are immediately extinguished when they strike bodies of water. Sgt Dottle was further advised to obtain a Geiger counter to see if any radioactivity was present at the crash site, perhaps as a result of a faulty spacecraft or satellite re-entry. Obviously, Dr. Hynek also feared that a snap unit had survived the re-entry and may have been leaking its contents into the pond.

Upon hanging up the phone, I awoke my wife, Grace, kissed her and our sleeping children goodbye, and started the early morning trek along the north-eastern extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike toward Carbondale. As I drove through the Lehigh Valley I was still listening to radio news reports concerning the incident - and while some of the accounts seemed to be a bit sketchy, there were relatives of Carbondale residents phoning the radio station with additional information and some obvious rumours too.

As the events of the Carbondale saucer crash unfolded, the rumours would include suspicions that a Soviet missile

was in the pond, that only a portion of a Soviet missile was in the pond, while still another section had crashed into Elk Lake about 25 miles north-west of Carbondale. There was also a rumour that an alien space ship had landed - not crashed - in the silt pond and that the military had managed to recover whatever was in the water and spirit it away before anyone had an opportunity to see it (i.e., the story was beginning to take on characteristics of the earlier Kecksburg, Aztec and Roswell UFO crash reports). In one rumour scenario, the UFO was loaded upon a flatbed railcar that was brought to the site on a nearby (albeit, long abandoned) railroad spur - and in another account, two military helicopters were used to lift the object from the water and place it in an armoured truck. Curiously, I too became linked to a rather ridiculous rumour which placed me at the scene as a government agent or high ranking Air Force officer disguised as a UFO field investigator.

But the truth was that I was just a guy who had an interest in the UFO phenomenon and had been investigating sighting reports for about two years prior to the incident. I had been in the US Army 12 years earlier, as a specialist Fourth Class (i.e. not quite the equivalent of a corporal) in the infantry. I founded UFORIC, the Philadelphia-based UFO Report and Information Center, in 1972 and served as its director until 1980. I also swept the office floor and emptied the waste paper basket. I was simply a student of the phenomenon, not a self-proclaimed expert, and I went to Carbondale because the reported incident interested me. UFORIC was a very small research organisation, consisting of only five volunteer investigators. Many of our reports were passed on to us by technicians at the Philadelphia Franklin Institute's Fels Planetarium, several police departments, both commercial and military air facilities and two local newspapers - while direct calls from the public were also received and routinely investigated.

As I entered the community of Carbondale, about 4:30 - 5:00 a.m. on the morning of 11 November, I asked directions to the police station and briefly conferred with detective sergeant Dottle. He informed me that Dr Hynek was dispatching a UFO field investigator from New York State to assist the police in their efforts to identify and possibly

recover the object in the pond. Sgt Dottle then asked if I would assist him until Dr Hynek's representative arrived and I agreed to do so. I was then taken to the crash site which was cordoned off by two Carbondale police officers and a group of youngsters who were members of the Civil Air Patrol (i.e., aeronautical boy scouts).

There were not any armed troops or technical military contingents of any kind present. But I did briefly speak to an Air Force officer (a major or lieutenant-colonel) at the pond much later in the day. I believe that he was involved with the Civil Air Patrol's community service related activities at the scene. I think that the officer's name tag read "Merriman". (?) Anyway, several volunteer fire companies from neighbouring communities were summoned and they assisted in the recovery efforts by pumping thousands of gallons of water from the pond as Sgt Dottle, Dr Hynek's investigator, Mr Dains, Mr Barry of the 20th Century UFO Bureau and I felt that this was a far safer method of obtaining a look at the submerged object than permitting a scuba diver to enter the water.

By first light, several press people and scores of the general public were permitted to visit the site, as various attempts to locate the object were made and radiological surveys were performed. As the morning wore on, the news media people were clamouring for a conclusion to the drama as news story deadlines were rapidly approaching and the crowds which were estimated at between 1500 to 3000 people were becoming larger and larger. I later learned that perhaps as many as 10,000 people had jammed the roads leading into the city in an attempt to see what was going on. Chief Dottle even had neighbouring community police departments assist with the control of the increased traffic into the area. It looked just like a scene from a science fiction movie and fears grew that emergency vehicles could not have got through if they were needed. To make matters worse, although we hadn't a ghost of an idea of what was actually in the water, rumours were spreading like a brush-fire and a few very vocal UFO enthusiasts who were milling about at the site were questioning the effectiveness of the police, fire companies and UFO researchers' retrieval efforts.

Sgt Dottle began to fear that some minor incident involving the control of the crowds might spark a riot (or a panic) that his small police force couldn't possibly handle. Sgt Dottle found himself caught in the rather unenviable position of being damned if he did and damned, still, if he didn't do what everyone expected of him. He wanted to ensure the safety of the public, his men and the volunteers at the pond, while the media and the saucer buffs in the crowd were chomping at the bit for a quick and spectacular climax to the story. The pressure and anticipation were building with each passing hour, and while Mr Dains and I shared Chief Dottle's concerns about safety, we were also concerned that the mysterious object in the water be spared from loss or damage by our recovery efforts.

Of course, not everyone was on the same page (i.e. thinking about safety and the preservation of evidence). I distinctly recall one persistent and annoying fellow asking me why we hadn't used more fire companies to do the pumping. When I replied that we didn't think it necessary (or prudent) to leave the surrounding communities without adequate fire protection, he grew visibly agitated and said "Well, you should be digging for that damned flying saucer now that the water level is down a bit!" Somehow, I knew that no matter how far we dug, if we still hadn't found anything, this guy would be saying, "Just two more feet and a bit to the left!"

In fact, Sgt Dottle had requested the use of a large crane fitted with a massive magnet (i.e., the type used at auto salvage yards) since the pumping operations which commenced a little before noon hadn't been very successful, and were taking far longer than anticipated to complete. Silt, mud and assorted bits of trash in the pond were clogging the pumping lines and we even had concerns that the huge magnet might crush whatever was in the water so we opted to use a backhoe to help lower the water level of the pond by digging a drainage ditch from it. This too, was time consuming and there were concerns that the pond might empty too quickly causing a deluge of polluted (and possibly radioactive) water to engulf the area. It seemed that we would have to send in a diver to take a quick look-see at the object.

The diver, Mr Mark Stamey, age 26,

was also a volunteer from New York State. He drove to the crash scene with a friend after hearing about the UFO incident on a car radio. He told me that he felt that all the publicity about his assistance with the sunken UFO would be a real boost for his fledgling diving business. Stamey also asked me to write him a note informing his state parole officer that I had requested he cross state lines to assist in the recovery operations.

I told Stamey that I hadn't the authority to do that and suggested he speak to Mr Dains or Chief Dottle about his dilemma. I later observed Stamey preparing his diving equipment and assumed that the question of his parole status had been straightened out. So, after briefing him on the scant information we had gathered and conveying our concerns that the object might still be electrified and/or radioactive, the diver slipped into his wet suit and prepared to enter the silt pond.

The UFO researchers were being interviewed by the press and a TV station's helicopter circled the pond churning up the water. Although we still hadn't any solid information on what the object in the water might be, Dr Hynek's representative and I were starting to suspect that the incident might be a prank that the teens had perpetrated on a nothing else to do Saturday night whim. We thought that perhaps their hoax simply got out of control and took on a life of its own - and that the boys may have been too scared to fess up to what they had done.

Of course, it may have been that the boys had witnessed a meteor or a bolide (a large and occasionally exploding meteor) streaking across the night sky and mistakenly assumed that it was the same luminous object that they discovered moments later in the pond. This seemed to be a reasonable notion, as the boys' description of the aerial phenomenon they had observed was absolutely meteoric in character. In fact, I had very similar reports on file at the UFO report and information centre, reports that were later verified by technicians at the Fels Planetarium. One report stated, "About twenty stories overhead, a white fiery object with a red light on the underside about centre -flying east to west - it had sparks on the sides and coming from the rear section." The sighting duration was 15 seconds. (Mr Sanford Epstein, Levittown, Pennsylvania, 14 June 1974 -

9:15 p.m. EST).

Moreover, while attempting to discover who had perpetrated the hoax (if one had been committed?) was one of the field investigator's tasks, it was quite naturally, primarily a police matter as a great deal of the authority's time and resources were expended during the 44 hour UFO drama. The UFO researchers' interests and responsibilities were to identify the object (if possible) and to preserve any evidence found from damage or loss (if possible). They would also gather eyewitness testimony on the incident to be used in later evaluation and analysis of the matter and in determining the veracity of the witnesses. But in the Carbondale case, the researchers were also presented with the opportunity and distinct privilege of working with the community's authorities towards a safe and successful resolution of the incident. Unlike other "downed UFO incidents" where UFO investigators and civilian volunteers were reportedly turned away from the area by the military and police officials, such was definitely not the case at Carbondale.

According to the boys, John Lloyd, 14, William Lloyd, 16, and Robert Gillette, 15, the object that they observed coursing through the evening sky was a relatively ill-defined flaming mass with a shower of sparks trailing it as it rapidly travelled on an east to west course. Report sketches provided by the Lloyd brothers show an oval object with the descriptive words "red, yellow and white" printed under the drawing. But an earlier drawing by Bobby Gillette looks something like a lens seen on its edge - Gillette's object also has a red dot in its centre. The teenage trio did not hear any sounds coming from the object as it descended, according to their first oral and written accounts - nor did the boys actually see it plummet into the pond. But one of the lads would later say that he saw cinders falling from it. My inspection of the alleged crash site revealed that there were no topographical indicators to suggest that something like a plane, a large piece of space junk or a meteor had impacted the pond or the area surrounding it.

There wasn't any obvious displacement of earth; there was no displacement of water from the pond; there were no indicators of a fire, downed tree limbs or skid marks creating a gouge in the soil like the one which is said to

have been evident at the J.B. Foster ranch near Roswell, New Mexico in 1947. Interestingly, the details of the Roswell UFO story were not very well known by the general public or the press corps at the time of the Carbondale incident, but the reported UFO crash at Kecksburg in the western part of Pennsylvania had occurred nine years earlier and had received some attention by the press.

But Carbondale's UFO (as a structural configuration) was not observed on the ground or while it was in the water. No one knew if it was a disc, a sphere like Sputnik or a cylindrical craft of some kind. There was just the glowing 5 foot circle of light on the water which the boys said had sizzled or softly hissed for several seconds. Interestingly, while the police were poking around (in search of the submerged object) with a long pole that was fitted with a fish net, the disc of light suddenly charged their boat and one officer instinctively drew his revolver and fired at it!

In the pandemonium of the harrowing moment, the officer lost his balance and fell out of the boat into the silt pond which was said to have had a bottom like quicksand! I was unable to confirm this story with police officials at Carbondale back in 1974, but a deputy sheriff from the neighbouring community of Honesdale, Pennsylvania later told Ohio MUFON's chief researcher, Mr Larry Moyers, that Officer Joseph Jacobina (or Jacobino) had fired six shots at the on-rushing light.

Reportedly, patrolman Mark Trella (or Eltrilla) thought that he had snagged the object in the fish net at one point while in the boat, but it seemed to be quite heavy and slipped away. It was thought that the attempt had up-ended the object and the light was either facing down into the silt or else, it went out entirely. When the pole was retracted from the water, it was noticed that the fish net on the end of it was slightly torn. But, the effort was not completely in vain as it was also noted that the 5 foot in diameter disk of light on the water's surface appeared to emanate from a much smaller point of light at the bottom of the pond. In other words, the officers had observed an apparent cone-of-light in the water.

When Mr Dains took water samples from the pond, I was surprised to see that the water was basically clear and one could see for about a depth of 3 to 4 feet

into it. I observed a discarded auto tyre, bits of trash and a sunken vehicle's roof and hood areas. Of course, looking at the daylight reflecting off the water's surface made the water appear to be more opaque, and at certain angles the pond's silt floor appeared to give the water a brownish-grey cast. The water was indeed polluted, but it wasn't very discoloured. Naturally, when the pond's silt and muddy bottom were disturbed the water did become very cloudy and murky-looking. The pond was an abandoned coal cleaning breaker pit that had managed to fill up with rain water over the years. Mr Dains and I also walked around the pond with instruments to detect magnetic disturbances; none were noted.

This cone-of-light seemed to be consistent with Sgt Dottle's early suspicions that the object was probably a flashlight. Moreover, Officer Trella's remarks that the object seemed to be too heavy to be a flashlight were based on the difficulty that he experienced while attempting to lift the object in the net on the end of a 10 foot long pole. In fact, he may have even been struggling with other debris, mud and silt on the pond's bottom at the time (?). Anyway, it seems that the light in the water was visible for a period of six to eight hours - depending upon one's acceptance of the boys' reported discovery time or the initial observation of it by the Carbondale police. (i.e. from 7:00-9:00 p.m. on the night of 9 November to approximately 3:00-3:30 a.m. on the morning of the 10th).

It is entirely possible that when officer Trella attempted to retrieve the object in the net and he thought it had slipped away, he may have caused the lantern to fall into another location on the bottom of the pond. Or he may have merely nudged the lantern which then resettled itself in the silt, thereby creating the illusion that it was rushing towards the boat. Additionally, any fisherman can tell you that lifting things on the end of a pole is strenuous, and that the object being lifted is perceived to be heavier and larger than it really is.

THE INVESTIGATORS

The 20th Century UFO Bureau

Robert D. Barry, the representative of the 20th Century UFO Bureau, had come to the site passing out religious pamphlets,

and proclaiming that UFOs were "fallen angels and messengers of Satan's deception". He was the director and lone researcher of the UFO bureau which was funded by the late Reverend Carl McIntire. Reverend McIntire was a so-called "firebrand fundamentalist preacher" who was broadcasting his "pirate" TV and radio ministry from a converted WWII minesweeper which was positioned just outside the territorial waters of the United States. His licence to broadcast from Collingswood and Cape May, New Jersey had been revoked (or suspended) by the Federal Communications Commission. I won't bother to go into the details of his long story, but Mr Barry was the reverend's publicist and also hosted his own TV programme devoted to UFOs and the paranormal. I will, however, let two excerpts from the UFO related pamphlets which were being handed out at Carbondale speak for themselves:

"DID YOU KNOW: That astronomers report that there is no life on the other planets of our solar system, except very low forms of vegetation, such as mosses, which have been detected on Mars; that life such as we know it could not exist on them; and that our nearest star is so far away that we cannot see any planets that might be revolving about it, hence the idea of their being "space ships" from another planet is untenable?

Another excerpt continues,

"That the general conclusion in these unexplained (UFO) cases is that they are either (1) some sort of secret weapon of some nation on earth, or (2) "space ships" from another planet, or (3) supernatural? Do you know that, "signs and lying [deceiving] wonders were to come in the Harvest - the end of the Gospel Age?" (Matt. 13:30, 38-40; Rev. 14:15-20; 2 Thes. 2:8-12)".

Interestingly, magazine journalist Jim Payson would report that Mr Barry was also telling folks at the crash site that UFOs were part of a divine design to bring the peoples of the universe together. But Mr Barry would alter his estimate of the situation regarding the object in the pond once more a few days after the incident had been concluded, when interviewed by a reporter from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* who subsequently wrote in a 25 November 1974 article that Mr Barry believed the sunken object was probably an errant Soviet missile which

was retrieved by our military and returned to the Soviets under the guidelines of a previously established "secret exchange program" involving errant space junk discoveries by either nation.

Apparently, Mr Barry learned of this secret agreement from a military man, a colonel, whom he was not at liberty to identify. It is presumed that the Space Junk accord didn't include the return of nuclear devices that the missiles may have contained or other devices such as spy cameras, etc.

As far as I have been able to determine, Mr Barry's explanation regarding the American / Soviet "exchange" of errant missiles and other space junk appears to be an agreement that has never been put into actual practice by either nation. Most space vehicle re-entries are planned to harmlessly fall into the Pacific Ocean, and even if a satellite, rocket, capsule or spent booster stage were to fall upon a land mass there wouldn't be very much left to return to its owner. I think that Mr Barry's unidentified informant may have misunderstood the parameters of such an agreement - if one existed (?), much like the obvious error in the pamphlet's claim of there being vegetation on the planet Mars. (However, in all fairness, I must mention that recent scientific discoveries indicate that shallow salt water seas probably existed on Mars in the red planet's distant past but, vegetation has not been detected.) Moreover, Mr Barry further stated in regard to the Carbondale incident that, "As far as we're [the 20th. Century UFO Bureau] concerned, the flashlight is a hoax."

I wrote to Mr Barry requesting a copy of his investigative report regarding the Carbondale matter on 6 December 1974 and he did not respond to my request. Interestingly, I discovered a copy of his report posted on the Internet as I was writing this essay in February of 2004, along with a great deal of other data concerning the incident. Up to that point, I hadn't realised how much the Carbondale legend had taken root in "Saucerdom".

Curiously, Mr Dain's (Dr Hynek's representative) 5 page report appears to be mentioned in very brief excerpted form and commentary by various news journalists at several sites on the web, while UFORIC's 31 page report, which was readily available as a matter of public record at the Carbondale police

department appears to have been read by a lone magazine writer- Mr Jim Payson - who used a bit of the data in a rather lengthy *MEN* magazine article published in August of 1975.

I also sent copies of UFORIC's report to J. Acuff at NICAP in Kensington, Maryland, James Lorenzen at APRO in Tucson, Arizona, and Dr J. Allen Hynek of the CUFOs in Evanston, Illinois. I did not receive a reply or a notice that they had received the report. I am therefore, left completely out regarding their opinion of it. Even more curious is the fact that in 30 years of alleged interest in the Carbondale case by many ufologists, only two UFO researchers have requested seeing the report, or called to ask a question concerning some aspect of the incident itself. Those two requests occurred in December of 1974. I have come to regard this lack of research thoroughness and objectivity as indicative of the paralysis of American UFO researching and the primary reason why the established scientific community tends to distance itself from the subject entirely.

CUFOS / MUFON / APRO

Dr Hynek's appointed UFO field investigator, Mr Douglas K. Dains of Port Crane, New York arrived at the Carbondale police headquarters building around 10:30 a.m. on 11 November driving a station wagon that had its doors boldly lettered "Southern Tier UFO Network". He interviewed the witnesses, and made observations and measurements at the alleged UFO crash site. He was thorough and very cooperative; I got the impression that he was reliable and objective. He also provided me with a copy of his report to Dr Hynek on the incident (stating that he strongly suspected the episode was a hoax).

Mr Dains said, "When talking to the Lloyd brothers I had the distinct impression that they were extremely exaggerating on their stories. I therefore find no scientific benefit for continuing the investigation. I therefore terminate my investigation until such time that evidence is presented to reopen the case." Dr Hynek thanked Mr Dains for his efforts and replied, "Though some questions remain unanswered, it is probably fruitless to continue an investigation - there are more clear cut cases I feel it would be more profitable to spend our time on."

One of the unanswered questions that seems to be of burning interest to many Carbondale case enthusiasts on the Internet is "Who called the scuba diver, Mark Stamey from Auburn, New York to help recover the object in the pond when there was a scuba team available in Scranton, Pennsylvania?" The answer is: No one called Mark Stamey, he came of his own volition. Sgt Dottle, Mr Dains and I were frustrated by the failed fish net, pumping and drainage ditch efforts and simply decided to take him up on his offer to search for the object (after setting several safety measures in effect) and put an end to the seemingly endless episode. Stamey wore an inflated vest that insured he would not touch the pond's bottom. He had ropes tied to his arms to make it easier to help him if he had problems resurfacing. There were also several men in the boat accompanying him, and an over-the-water radiological survey was being performed throughout the recovery attempt. In addition to the above precautions, Stamey's friend (a young fellow named Larry Langley) was prepared to also go into the water wearing his wet suit.

Isis Center

Ms Mary Schmitt of the Silver Spring, Maryland "Isis Center" was not actually at the site during the investigative/retrieval phases of the incident, but she arrived in Carbondale shortly after the recovery efforts were concluded. She also wrote a detailed 19 page report on the matter after interviewing the witnesses and several other people in the community. Her findings were that there was a "flap" of UFO activity in the Carbondale area. She said that the boys who observed the object (Bobby Gillette, John Lloyd and his brother William Lloyd) felt that they were being maligned as liars and hoaxers by the police authorities because the boys had squealed on the cops for not responding very promptly to their first call about the object in the pond.

Reportedly, the boys notified the police between 7:00 or 8:00 on the night of 9 November, but the police records indicate that they first heard of the luminous object in the pond from an unidentified person at about 9:00 p.m.. and dispatched officers John Barbaro and Joseph Jacobina to investigate the situation. Ms Schmitt's report contains numerous accounts from both identified

and unidentified informants who claim to have been first- or second-hand witnesses to events at the pond - or to additional UFO sightings in the vicinity. But police records indicate that although several reports had come into headquarters on the night of the 9th, those reports pertained to the submerged light in the pond, not unidentified flying objects per se, although the two had been possibly linked by the teens. Curiously, my field notes indicate that one of the boys told me that he and his companions had actually gone to the police department to report the light in the pond around 9 p.m.

When I first read Ms Schmitt's report I thought, "What a collection of hearsay, utter nonsense and rumour." I even wrote her a letter stating so in March of 1975. But I've come to appreciate her work at Carbondale very much since then, if not for its investigative value, then for its remarkable reporting of how rapidly the rumour-mongering and sensation-seeking had taken hold of the community. Suddenly, a rather lack-lustre incident at the pond was turned into a full-blown piece of American folklore! It seemed that the incident had kindled every kind of speculation, fantasy, and mythological musing that the human psyche was capable of conjuring up.

On page 9 of Ms Schmitt's report we learn that, "Another witness to the manifestations at the pond was Bill Brady, age 19, who called us on November 13th on the advice of Bobby Gillette's mother. He stated that he had been out at 11:30 on Saturday night (November 9th) with Miss Peggy Mendez when he was told that a strange flying object was in the park. Neither he or Miss Mendez believed this but later they got curious and decided to go to the park and have a look. They arrived at 1:45 a.m. on Sunday morning and found that police had a block on the main road to the pond. Mr Brady knew another road that approached the pond through a swampy area. They found it left unguarded. Thus, they were able to get within thirty feet of the pond."

The account continues, "Sitting on the water's surface was a round object, 2 feet wide and 2 1/2-3 feet tall, glowing blue and humming like a generator. Seven or eight people were around the thing; none of them were in uniform. Four flashlights were in use. Mr Brady and Miss Mendez watched for about ten minutes until two of the people around the thing spotted

them and came over to ask them to leave, proclaiming that, 'this matter is none of your business.' Miss Mendez and Mr Brady feigned leaving the site and returned about 15 minutes later and remained until the cold drove them away. But, Mr Brady reported that they had seen a boat in the water and that he thought one of the men that asked them to leave was Chief Dottle, although young Brady wasn't certain about that because it was quite dark that night."

In yet another revealing account Ms Schmitt writes, "Another non-witness to the UFO event was Mr John Bauman, owner of the Russell Park Pond. We were unable to reach him due to his heavy work schedule but we did speak with his wife. She says that she and her husband were only at the scene about 45 minutes and saw nothing unusual themselves; and did not know what really happened." Mrs Bauman also expressed her concerns and reluctance to permitting the authorities to drain or pump out the pond.

Ms Schmitt continues, "Mrs Bauman heard so many rumours that she decided to give up on knowing what to really think. She was told that the object was part of a Russian missile; the other part had landed in South Canaan. One person told her that the object in the pond was removed on a flatbed truck; someone else said it wasn't true; it was removed in an armoured car. Again, she was informed that someone had gone into town, purchased the lantern and threw it 'to divert attention.' She did understand that the object 'gracefully came down, stood on the surface, and sunk.'" Ms Schmitt also seemed to be interested in learning if the pond had any ledges located beneath the water's surface. (i.e. presumably, a place where the downed UFO might elude detection).

Ms Schmitt concluded her report on the Carbondale UFO incident by saying. "The presence of the lantern did not explain all the manifestations that had occurred in Carbondale that weekend. The lantern in itself did not appear to our informants to be powerful enough to account for the pond light." To this I must quickly add, that Ms Schmitt's informants also did not appear to have any apparent expertise in the study of light dispersion or its magnification in water.

I performed a simple experiment by placing a lit flashlight's beam behind and beneath a glass of water; its light was

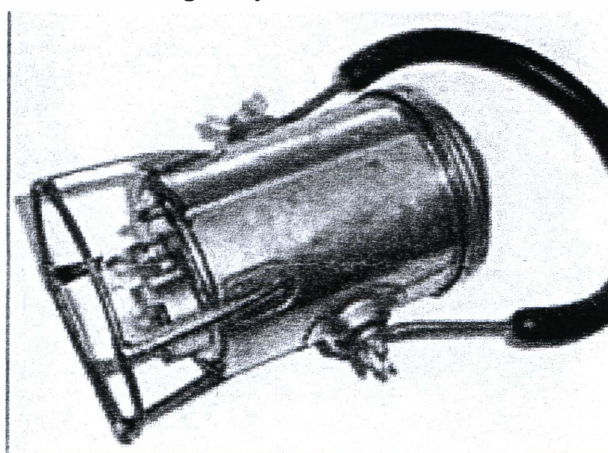
magnified. I then tried the same experiment with a glass of slightly tinted water (using iced tea) in an attempt to simulate the so-called murky water of the pond; the results were quite striking and as suspected, the partly tinted water created an orange cast to the light. I then performed yet another unscientific experiment by placing a very inexpensive (non-waterproof) plastic flashlight (powered by two "D" batteries) in a bucket of water to see how long it might remain illuminated. The flashlight remained lit for 2 hours and 52 minutes and appeared to be quite bright during the first hour and 15 minutes of the experiment. The "D" batteries were rated at 1.5 volts each and were of a general purpose variety, not long-life or heavy duty types. Because the flashlight remained aglow for almost 3 hours, I feel that a 6 volt extra long-life battery might possibly last for 6 to 8 hours. It would be very interesting to see how long a heavy duty 6 volt battery would power a submerged lantern.

Additionally, the flickering and pulsating effect of the submerged light in the pond may have been attributable to aquatic life, such as fish, amphibians that had not yet hibernated and mammals (e.g., musk rats which were observed in the pond) that were attracted to the light source much as moths and other insects are drawn to a flame. Such aquatic life may have been observed as it passed in front of the light's beam, thereby creating the illusion of flickering. I didn't have an opportunity to thoroughly examine the lantern taken from the pond but I noticed that it had a twin bulb assembly and one of the bulbs may have been a steady burning light, while the other may have been a flasher type? This too, could account for the pulsating or flickering effect noted by the boys and the policemen at the scene (?). I did however quickly remove the battery from the lantern to see what condition it was in. According to my field notes, the battery (a Sears Roebuck Extra long-life 6 volt type) appeared to be slightly swollen and had a split along its side where its casing was seamed. It looked as if some of its contents had seeped out along this split, and the contacts looked as if they were slightly corroded.

NICAP

Another UFO researcher who was not present at the time of the lantern's recovery, but who did visit Detective Sergeant Dottle a day or two later was a young blond-haired college student (Mike Mery, 20) who strolled into Sgt Dottle's office and said, "Good afternoon Chief, I'm with NICAP." According to *Philadelphia Inquirer* staff writer, Jim Mann, Dottle snapped back, "NICAP?", and the young fellow explained, "Why yes, The National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena." Dottle's face quickly reddened and he replied, "Well, there's your stink'n aerial phenomena fella, a flashlight. The end result of thousands of hours of manpower and effort ... a stink'n flashlight!"

Who could have blamed the sergeant for his anger? By that time all the



Photograph of Conger Railroad Lantern, courtesy of Flashlight Museum - Van O Lite, Inc. The Conger lantern was also sold at Sears Roebuck stores under the brand name "Homart", and was first manufactured in 1950.

excitement, confusion and stress had settled down and Dottle's ire had peaked - perhaps too, a few of the acting chief's darker thoughts about UFO experts and the circus-like atmosphere that the media had sparked around the incident had surfaced? But, after the verbal dust had settled, Dottle even showed the young man "the object of his rage" as it sat silently and unlit upon a nearby desktop. Few folks knew that Dottle had been called to the pond on the night of the 9th, just as his daughter's first birthday party was getting underway. He had missed the family gathering over a "stink'n flashlight", and Dottle was now confronted with explaining the cost of the

recovery efforts, the overtime pay of his officers and the embarrassing discharging of a firearm by one of his patrolmen. If my memory serves me correctly, Officer Jacobina was a rookie, or a part-time officer, at the time of the incident.

The Carbondale UFO/Lantern was indeed a sorry memento of a very costly prank that the economically distressed community of Carbondale could hardly afford. Remarkably, when I questioned a police officer about the possibility of there being an official inquiry into the boys' activities concerning the incident as a suspected hoax, the officer confided that it was known that the Lloyd brothers had very minor run-ins with the police in the past, and that their father and grandparents were doing the best that they could with them since their mother's passing. Moreover, Sgt Dottle didn't want to put the family through any additional hardship.

"Beau Gestes" of this kind still do happen in communities where everybody knows one another and times are difficult. So too, I believe that this previously unreported kindness speaks volumes about the kind of man Sgt Dottle is and how he feels about kids. One time, he was called to investigate a child abuse situation where an angry man had put a baby in a trash can. As the story goes, Dottle was so upset with the uncooperative fellow that he tossed him into a trash can and hauled his butt off to jail.

Ironically, Detective Sergeant Francis X. Dottle (Mitch to his friends) is portrayed in the UFO literature as a villain, the man who single handedly imposed Martial Law on the town and even as the man who may have thrown the lantern in the pond to cover up the truth. He's presented as the Lloyd brothers' antagonist when in fact he went much easier on them than they did on him, Carbondale's 14 man police department or the community itself. Thanks to the professionalism, wisdom and supervision of Sgt Dottle no one was injured during the entire 44 hour fiasco. Twenty-five years later, one of the original three boys (Bobby Gillette) confessed to three *Scranton Times* journalists that he and his buddies had indeed tossed the lantern into the pond as a joke. Detective Lt Dottle retired in 1998; he and his wife presently reside

near Carbondale.

Yet, this confession which was published in the *Scranton Sunday Times* - 7 November 1999 - is ignored by the UFO believers who would rather embrace the fantasy that something momentous occurred on that long ago night in November. One of the more vocal of these UFO enthusiasts is a fellow named Ron Hannivig of nearby Simpson, Pennsylvania. Mr Hannivig even wrote a "rebuttal" to Bobby Gillette's confession and went on to say in yet another writing about the incident at the pond, "Our entire world was at a significant cross road back then, and we must find out what really happened, or else, we may all become as dysfunctional as today's typical Carbondalean, that possibly, per se would indeed be a truly frightening situation."

Thankfully, today's misdiagnosed "Carbondaleans" can find solace in the knowledge that a Homart train man's lantern (manufactured by the Conger Lantern Co. of Portland, Oregon) was the only thing recovered from the pond moments after the diver had started his search for the submerged object. The time of the recovery was 2:36 p.m. on 11 November. The lantern was located on the pond's floor at a depth of about 7 feet. Remarkably, one of its bulbs was reported to be very faintly aglow as it was picked up and then it went out completely. It was speculated that the displacement of water in the lantern cylindrical body may have permitted the battery to momentarily illuminate the bulb's filament. Many in the huge crowd surrounding the pond let out a collective groan of disappointment as the lantern breached the water's surface atop Mark Stamey's outstretched arm, then the question, "What the hell is it?" was muttered by more than one onlooker as the lantern was brought ashore.

It was an odd looking contraption (about 12 inches in length) and fitted with a hard black rubber handle that looked like a mini-hula hoop. I later learned that such lanterns are quite common in coal-cracker and railroading towns where they are presently used as decorative pieces in taverns and restaurants with a nostalgic ambiance.

The lantern was first thought to have been stolen from a railroad yard, and someone must have thrown it into the pond for fear of being found with it in their possession. Police officials informed me that there had been several earlier

incidents of youngsters breaking into boxcars with railroad property being taken and vandalised. So, it seemed reasonable to suspect that this incident was a similar theft and vandal related matter, for from a purely circumstantial evidence point of view, railroad lanterns simply do not take wing and fly into ponds under their own power. Someone had to have tossed it into the water.

But, this perfectly obvious point eluded a veteran magazine writer who felt that my theory on the Carbondale case was flawed by the fact that "People simply do not lose lighted lanterns in desolate ponds." Actually, all I said was that the boys may have seen a meteor and mistakenly assumed it to be the object that they discovered in the pond moments later. I opted for the idea that the lantern was thrown into the pond by a person or persons still unknown at the time of my original report's writing.

Ohio MUFON

But then, there was yet another rumour being bandied about concerning a deputy sheriff from a neighbouring town who knew exactly what was in the water, and that he sought Sgt Dottle's permission to further investigate the matter in scuba gear on the morning of 11 November (just hours before the lantern was recovered). Reportedly, Dottle denied the Honesdale deputy permission to enter the silt pond and opted to wait for Dr Hynek's representative before allowing anyone to dive into the frigid water. Later, the deputy even went so far as to claim that he had tapped on the sunken UFO with a boat's oar and traced the edge of its rim with electronic equipment on the morning of the 10th. The Honesdale deputy spun the yarn that the "real object" was probably still down in the silt pond after the lantern had been removed.

Like a would-be Dr Clayton Forrester (i.e., the lead character portrayed by actor Gene Barry in the sci-fi motion picture thriller *The War of the Worlds*), the deputy sheriff seemed to be the only one present at the crash site who had a firm grasp on the gravity of the situation. In fact, much of the Carbondale crash legend that exists today may be traced directly back to him. He may be to the Carbondale legend what fallen-star witness Frank Kaufmann is to the Roswell myth.

As the story goes, Deputy Ned Dailey (a pseudonym) had a decade old interest

in the UFO phenomenon and numerous sightings of his own to report. He also had a desire to be an official UFO researcher and was quite excited when he heard about the situation in Carbondale. Deputy Dailey requested permission to leave work on Sunday morning 10 November 1974 and drove to the site with a friend who shared his interest in UFOs.

According to the deputy, he and his companion (we'll call him Fred) observed an unusual cloud down in the valley (in the general direction of Carbondale) and they stopped their car to get out and see if any appreciable wind was blowing down Far View Mountain towards that location. They detected no wind and felt that the lone (strange) cloud was probably situated in the vicinity of Russell Park and the ole silt pond.

As fate would have it, their remarkable powers of observation and dead-reckoning skills brought them to the pond where the mysterious cloud stretched ominously above the water. The deputy then noticed a little girl near the pond (amidst a crowd of approximately 250 to 300 people) and she had a small transistor radio in her hand that seemed to be malfunctioning - as the radio station she had it tuned to (WCDL) was nearby and had quite a powerful transmitter. The deputy, who claimed to have had many years of experience with electronics, immediately suspected that the sunken object might be causing the radio interference (which he described as a sparking sound with a humming tone in the background) and he decided to further investigate the matter.

Without telling anyone what he was up to, or asking to have a look at the radio, the deputy started to walk around the perimeter of the pond while a small group of onlookers and the little girl followed him. As he did so, he noticed that the radio interference continued, so he then decided to walk away from the pond for a distance of approximately 150 feet and, as the crowd and the little girl followed, the transistor radio's reception improved.

Here are several excerpts of a taped interview with deputy Ned Dailey that representatives of the Ohio Mutual UFO Network recorded after the incident was considered to be closed, (i.e. despite the fact that Dr Hynek's hand-picked UFO field investigator had reported the matter to be a probable hoax to the MUFON

organization's headquarters). Deputy Dailey says, "I thought, well, it's still possible that something could be wrong with the girl's radio. So, I asked a sergeant of the National Guard where this thing was supposed to have gone in and he pointed out the spot. At the same time, I was noticing that this cloud above the pond had a ceiling of about maybe 30 feet and it was about the approximate diameter of the pond itself. It was staying right there. I picked up a rock and I threw it up at the cloud. I don't know why, I just did. I guess I wanted to see if maybe there was anything inside the cloud that I could hit it with a rock (nervous chuckle) but it went straight on through and landed on the bank."

The deputy's story continues, "And while I was talking to the sergeant, I noticed another curious thing, the water had 'a sympathetic vibration' all across its top from one end to the other. When I say that it's almost as if someone had put a transducer in one end of the pond and fed a low frequency signal to it on the order of maybe 60 to 80 cycles per second and produced these ripples evenly across the pond. Of course, I brought this to the attention of my friend Fred. He said, 'Well, if the wind was blowing, then I would tend to believe that the wind was causing this ripple, but there is no wind!' Well I said, I guess we better check to see if anybody is throwing any rocks in. Of course, if they are, they'd have to be doing it at a pretty constant rate to keep that ripple going. But looking around, I guess that people were maybe afraid to get near the edge of the pond ... they were quite far back from it. No one was throwing rocks at that time."

The techno-peppered plot thickens as Deputy Dailey continues, "The Geiger counter had a curious reading and I still haven't figured out why. I took it over the complete pond when I went out in a boat later but before I went out in the boat I walked around the pond with it. It went from point one and held between point one and point two reading - it wasn't a fluctuating reading, it was a steady reading on the Geiger counter and this was curious in itself. It can be reproduced with the little sample (radioactive) piece on the side of the Geiger counter that you check your Geiger counter with. I couldn't understand how the pond was carrying that (reading) over the whole pond without going up or down where any

particular source would be.

"Today after thinking about it greatly, I don't think it [the reading] was ever on the pond - because it was later when I was thinking a lot clearer that I realised that when the cloud went away so did the reading drop. You see, the cloud itself was what caused this funny reading, it had to be!" (It should be noted that many ufologists believe that some UFOs have the capability to cloak themselves in a sheath of cloud, mist or smoke - and that they also emit slag, angel hair-like substances and radiation.)

"In any event, I asked if anyone was going to go out on the pond and see if they could find out what was in there. No, nobody wanted to go. Even our great National Guard didn't want to go. So, I said to the sergeant of the National Guard, 'Well look, do you think that you could get me a boat. I mean, I'll go out there.' He replied, 'Well, I don't know.' And I said, 'Well, see what you can do.' In about five or six minutes they came up with a boat, wherever they got it. Of course, it had oars and at the time I didn't think that was going to be a problem 'cause I had my buddy Fred with me. But, it turned out to be a big problem because Fred didn't want to go either. So, I put my stuff in the boat, got in, and out I went."

Deputy Dailey describes the difficulty of rowing a boat with one hand and attempting to take scientific measurements as he reached the location in the pond where the object was said to have impacted the water. He continues, "At that time I conducted what I call a series of tests. I couldn't see anything because the water was turbulent, murky underneath on the last quarter of the pond where this object was supposed to have gone in. Why it was like that I don't know. I have some speculation ... ahh, the rest of the pond cleared up. In the middle of the pond I found a car, believe it or not - and I used the car under the water to calibrate the equipment I took with me for the purpose of going back to the spot and seeing if anything was there. Well, there was something there, I never did see it with my eyes but I measured it, felt it, and it wasn't a flashlight or a lantern." (Actually, the sunken automobile's rooftop was clearly visible from shore. The auto had reportedly been driven or pushed into the pond during the spring of 1974 by persons unknown.)

Deputy Ned Dailey continues his

story, "As a matter of fact, I dropped a string with a piece of rock tied on it into the water and the string went way down. It may have gone at a slight angle, I don't know. I had an awful time getting the string but one of the National Guard men finally dug me up a ball of string. The first thing I wanted to know was how deep it was where this object was supposed to have gone in. I measured 22 1/2 feet of string, approximately 15 feet from shore next to the object. The top of the object was approximately 2 1/2 to 2 3/4 feet below the surface of the water. I had an oar resting on top of the object. I felt it. Boom, kinda like that ... ya know."

"And when I held the oar on the object and finally managed to steady the boat enough, then I think I found out what was causing the vibration along the pond. I could feel the vibration in the oar. Whether it was a motor running or some kind of generator I don't know - but, there was a vibration to it. And, of course, as I put pressure on it, bubbles would rise up. I guess I was forcing this thing to go down a little further, probably, and air was coming off from underneath it ... trapped ... coming up along the sides."

The deputy continues, "Now, as a matter of fact, somebody hollered from the bank. 'What are you going to do if something comes out of there?' I said, 'I'm gonna run like hell, yeah, right across the top of the water!' It wasn't the idea of having nerves, it was the idea that I'd waited a long time and I had to know ... and ahh, nobody else would go in there at the time. The only reason I think that anybody went in there after is because I was on there the first time. But, I felt with the oar, moved it, and slid it on the object and it felt cylindrical. I thought to myself, it could be a rocket of some kind. But, if that was the nose that was down in there first the fins should show up by feeling with the oar ... there wasn't any."

"Of course, maybe they got burned off. I don't know. I then noticed something very peculiar that made me think that maybe the little girl's transistor radio wasn't broken down. I suddenly became aware of a humming tone in my Geiger counter's headphone which I was wearing at the time. It didn't dawn on me at first that it was probably the same tone I'd heard on the transistor radio. I said to myself, 'Now don't tell me that my stinking Geiger counter is going to break down on me at one of my ahh, the most

important times.'

"So, I unhooked the earphones from the Geiger counter, and ahh, I thought the tone went away. But, of course, my type of mind as the sheriff will attest to is one that don't let things go too easy"

In the background of the audio tape, Wayne County Sheriff Henry Kalinowski, Dailey's superior, can be heard likening the deputy's mental tenaciousness to tunnelled vision and chuckles erupt from the MUFON researchers.

"Ahh, I decided that if there was something that was causing a tone in the head phone that it had to be caused through induction and it would be increased if I shorted the end of the wire out. In other words, make it one short circuit.

"Well, I took a penny out of my pocket and I shorted the connector out and the tone did increase. That became very interesting to me and I pulled the boat away. As I moved away, the tone decreased. That's when I realised that there was really something down there that I couldn't let out to anybody.

"Because with all those people around, ya know with kids and everything else there could have been mass hysteria, and with the way people were flowing in there at the time, I'm sure that's what would have happened."

Continuing his fantastic story, the deputy explained how he had used a metal locator and a small compass to measure the submerged object. It measured about 11 feet in diameter and it was smooth - having no gaps or openings. He told of how he and his friend (Fred) had very accurately determined the flight paths of strange objects flying in the area with the aid of their compasses on several occasions in the past. He said that they had determined that the object in the silt pond probably didn't come in on the course that the Carbondale teens had described because Fred had also observed it and used his compass to obtain a true fix on its direction of travel. Interestingly, deputy Dailey never identified his friend (Fred) by name during the entire interview with the MUFON researchers. Rather, Dailey referred to him as "the guy I brought with me" or "the guy that wouldn't help me." At one point Dailey said, "I gotta hold of a mutual friend who claimed he had a great interest in this type of thing and who later backed out and I still haven't figured out why. Ahh, that's

another story in itself." The MUFON researchers did not ask deputy Dailey if Fred might be available to interview regarding the events he reportedly witnessed at the pond on Sunday morning, 10 November.

Deputy Dailey further stated while discussing his methods of measuring the submerged object, "I took a compass which of course, to me, is a real good piece of electronic gear. You can do things with a compass that you can do with a metal locator." The deputy had been fascinated with and experiencing UFO sightings since 1964 when a UFO incident was reported to have taken place at nearby Waymart, Pennsylvania. He had also reportedly observed several "white balls" and "flying wing-like objects" that had ten windows situated along their leading edge. These objects were all flying in the direction of Carbondale on the eve of his experience at the pond. He even thought that a fleeting white sphere had entered one of the larger craft.

The UFO researchers who had travelled from Ohio to interview the deputy were completely mesmerised by his rambling account of his experiences at the Russell Park pond. They never questioned the more than obvious absurdities, contradictions and improbabilities of his strung together sentences and general storyline. Rather, he would be heralded as a person "well qualified" and subsequently be appointed to the position of MUFON's State Section Director for Wayne and Pike counties in Pennsylvania, while his fantastic story would appear in the *Ohio Sky Watcher* newsletter in an article written by Richard Hoffman. Hoffman concluded his piece by saying, "I have one statement. Hoax or reality? I'm convinced that something alien was in that pond ... you be your own judge."

Of course, deputy Ned Dailey's investigative efforts at the pond were alleged to have occurred early Sunday morning on 10 November. Mr Dains and I didn't arrive on the scene until the following morning - but one must wonder why the deputy and his pal Fred didn't alert acting Chief Dottle to their discoveries or why they didn't contact NORAD, NASA or the press about Ned Dailey's findings at the pond. Doing so would certainly seem to be the proper and common sense thing for a public servant, such as a law enforcement officer to do.

In fact, considering Deputy Dailey's obvious mind set of being unable to let things go, one wonders why he didn't return to the pond after the crowds, the press, the UFO researchers and the Carbondale police had left the scene in order to further verify his findings. A curious turn of events considering that he "believed" the object was still submerged in the pond after the lantern had been recovered.

Moreover, if Ned Dailey was in possession of such important information, why didn't he inform one of the UFO field investigators at the site or even bother to contact Dr Hynek on the "UFO Report Hotline" which was specifically established for police department use? It appears that this very astute and knowledgeable UFO enthusiast simply chose to wait on the outcome of events before making his announcements. In other words, he was perfectly content to let others rediscover "his discoveries" thereby enabling them to receive all the fame, adulation and potential wealth that might come of it. I'll ask my readers what they think the plausibility of that sort of behavioural scenario might be.

But there's even a far more pointed question about the deputy's tale to ponder, and that is why no one other than he mentions seeing or interfacing with members of the National Guard at the site on the morning of 10 November? The answer is quite simple. The National Guard were not present as a response unit during the entire UFO drama, and the gullible Ohio MUFON researchers who interviewed deputy Dailey apparently never bothered to seek verification on this very critical point. Although one fellow, who was heard in the background of the interview audio tape, did ask Dailey if he was referring to the Civil Air Patrol. Dailey responded, "The CAP people were the ones that were further up on the hill." Obviously, the UFO researchers' "Will-To-Believe" had enabled them to swallow the deputy's pond story, rock, string and saucer!

However, five months after the incident, a magazine writer interviewing deputy Dailey about the status of his continuing investigation of the Carbondale case, (while in his new official capacity as a MUFON representative) reports that Dailey informed him that, "This is not a closed book, it can't be a closed book." Dailey

continued, "We're investigating incidents relating to the same time period and same direction of travel. A real serious investigation is going on. The Carbondale incident is at present only indirectly involved in the investigation, but it may become directly involved as more material develops."

For those of my readers who are not skilled at deciphering UFO investigator crypto-jargon, this simply means that the deputy is trying to shift the focus from the Carbondale pond incident to a batch of other reported sightings in the area which may or may not have been the products of overly active imaginations, rumour and "band wagoning". Curiously, the deputy apparently never informed the magazine journalist about his personal experiences with the submerged UFO, because his boating story does not appear anywhere within the magazine's action-packed six page exposé of the incident.

If anything at all was learned at Carbondale, it was that "The Will-To-Believe" that a UFO had splashed down in that pond certainly far surpassed the good intentions and efforts of the public officials who tried to ensure public safety, cooperate with UFO researchers and deal with the added demands of the news media (that is precisely why I have not thoroughly nit-picked the deputy's story and let him have his say). As one can easily see, the entire incident was blown completely out of proportion, a circus-like atmosphere engulfed the community which was suddenly and unsympathetically thrust into the global spotlight - although that light (much like the lantern's) faded and the city of Carbondale settled back into its near obscurity.

But the legend lives on and three decades later UFO buffs and self-appointed experts send e-mails to one another speculating and fantasising that the Carbondale UFO crash may be more significant to ufological (or ufoological, take your pick) history than the Roswell incident itself - and I suppose that may be true from a purely sociological point of view because Roswell only had a handful of alleged witnesses, while the recovery portion of the incident at Carbondale had been witnessed by a couple of thousand people. It's also a fact that this UFO incident didn't put the city of Carbondale, Pennsylvania on the Rand-McNally map - actually, it was always there - it's just that

no one had noticed until that UFO/Lantern, the overzealous ufologists and the insensitive national media came to town.

So, 30 years have passed, and I thought that I should dust off my ol' X-files on the case and tell the story as I recall it while pondering the testimony of the latest batch of newly discovered witnesses, non-witnesses and assorted yarn spinners whose accounts of the incident have appeared on the net (in both print and audio versions). I wonder why these many witnesses didn't approach Mr Dains, Mr Barry or me at the pond on that long ago November day - or why they didn't file reports with us immediately after things had settled down? I also have to wonder how the military managed to covertly remove the UFO from the pond when quite a few policemen had been going back and forth to the site throughout the fiasco and never saw anything unusual going on. The same is true of the fire company personnel, emergency vehicle drivers, the Civil Air Patrol members from Carbondale and Scranton along with police from neighbouring communities.

Additionally, it seems that if anyone of the above listed personnel had seen the military removing a UFO from the pond - surely one of them would have told his story after this long passage of time - for one of the officers had revealed that he didn't think the lantern was the object that he had momentarily caught in the fish net, and another patrolman even confessed to shooting at the submerged object because he thought it was a hoax. No one tried to stop these police officers from telling their stories, so where is the cover up? Where is the silencing of witnesses? Where are the death bed confessions and testimony involving a cover-up? Where are the 250-300 eyewitnesses to deputy Dailey's historic boating adventure on the Russell Park Pond? Where are the National Guardsmen who helped deputy Dailey? Might I respectfully suggest that they might be found on Fantasy Island?

In fact, Mr Jerry Palko, a retired journalist and resident of Carbondale reports that he was physically present at the pond for 36 hours of the 44 hour ordeal - only leaving very briefly to grab a cup of coffee and a sandwich - after all, he was a news reporter sitting on top of what may have been the story of the millennium! Finally, I'm also wondering

why Wayne County deputy Ned Dailey didn't return to the pond later in the day when the crowds had dispersed since he was so certain that something was still there just 2 1/2 feet below the water's surface? According to Ms Schmitt of the Isis Center, Mark Stamey (the diver) did return later that day and found absolutely nothing in that defunct coal breaker pit but polluted water and discarded junk. Additionally, since the fire companies' pumping operations had actually lowered the pond's water level by about 3 or 4 feet, why wasn't the object 2 1/2 feet below the surface, which deputy Dailey felt with the boat's oar sticking out of the water for all to see?

One final point that I'd like to share with my readers, concerns the totally distorted assertions that Sgt Dottle threatened the UFO investigators just before the 11 November late afternoon press conference was held, (i.e., following the lantern's recovery and the UFO investigators' departure from Russell Park). The truth is that Dottle strongly advised us not to mention an "unverified" report of a 150 roentgen radiological reading taken at the pond by a Civil Air Patrol youngster shortly after the UFO drama had ended.

Sgt Dottle did this simply because he was very concerned that such news might spark a panic in the community. I later returned to the pond and determined that the youngster was mistaken and that the reading was actually .05R.

This was the information that Dottle wanted to "keep a lid on"; there wasn't a cover up of a downed UFO at all. But Mr Barry would later weave this very insignificant incident into his self-serving errant Russian Missile Tale. I seriously doubt that an unidentified military spokesman ever informed Mr Barry about a covert recovery operation involving a missile at the Russell Park pond or Elk Lake. Rather, I feel that Mr Barry's story was spawned by Ned Dailey's boastful and utterly ridiculous account of things. Indeed, was Ned Dailey the unidentified source of Mr Barry's report? Did Ned Dailey mislead Mr Barry, just as he misled the Ohio MUFON researchers?

The reader should keep in mind that Mr Dains and I were not UFO sceptics or debunkers. We were objective UFO "proponents" who travelled to Carbondale with expectations of being involved in a meaningful case, and quite possibly an

historic event. Neither of those things panned out because unusual or incontrovertible evidence was not found, and the witnesses had discredited themselves with their exaggerated and changing stories. If the occurrence had been a real historic event, you would have read about the Carbondale incident years ago, and Mr Dains's, Mr Barry's and my name would be known to all, but you never heard of us did you? The reason for that is simple. A lantern was all that was found in the pond, not an alien craft or a Russian missile.

UFOLOGY AND UFOOLOGY

I've been reading about, hearing of, and investigating UFO reports for more than thirty years. I've seen the UFO phenomenon go through many changes and phases, and I've witnessed a great number of star witnesses and UFO experts come and go too. I've heard all the claims, all the counter claims, all the assumptions, suspicions and illogical theories (i.e., the ufology and the ufoology combined).

But I haven't heard anything that changes the fact that despite a half century of vigorous pursuit and pseudo-scientific inquiry, the core meaning and identity of the phenomenon remains a mystery - that is, IF a core or predominant meaning exists at all? I've come to suspect that many diverse occurrences are carelessly lumped together and mistakenly called the UFO phenomenon by quite a number of researchers whose work is both shoddy and lacking in objectivity.

In more recent times, the Abduction phase/craze of ufology has appeared to have reached its zenith, and the UFO experience as a primarily visually perceived event has been transformed into an invisible and therefore curiously tactile experience. Isn't it an amazing coincidence that a sculptor (turned UFO expert) would be the first researcher to make this remarkable discovery? Isn't it kind of curious that a staunch anti-communist preacher who had numerous run-ins with government authorities should have a publicist who was the only one of three UFO field investigators at

Carbondale to be privy to information concerning a high-level cover up involving a soviet missile? Think about it.

Back at UFORIC headquarters in Philadelphia on 12 November 1974 I was receiving calls from press and radio stations seeking additional information about "What had really happened out there in Carbondale?" I was also getting crank calls from individuals who were obviously upset with me for suggesting that the railroad lantern was indeed the object that caused all the excitement at the pond. I was called "a pinko son-of-a-bitch" and labelled as an undercover Air Force colonel who was in on the government's latest and perhaps most brazen UFO crash cover up, and Mr Dains was suspect too.

I recall that just moments after Mark Stamey had retrieved the lantern from the pond, I was greeted by my dear friend and fellow UFO field investigator, Mike McClellan. As Mike and I walked away from the scene in search of a local eatery of some kind, I filled him in on what had happened. We discovered a small storefront sandwich shop and approached the door just as the proprietor was closing. I hadn't eaten since the night before and was famished. I quickly explained my dilemma to the elderly lady and she graciously invited us inside, while explaining that the grill was already cold and cleaned for the day.

She said that she could come up with some pie and coffee though, and that seemed fine to me. As Mike and I sipped our coffee and enjoyed the large slice of homemade apple pie, Mike asked several questions about the incident and it became apparent that the lady, along with two of her lady friends, were hovering nearby in order to listen in on what we were saying. I asked for another cup of coffee and as the proprietor poured the brew she said, "Aren't you one of those flying saucer fellows that were down at the Russell Park pond?" I told her that I was, and with that she very seriously inquired, "What really happened down there?" I replied in a soft tone of voice, "Can I trust you ladies to keep a secret?" She said, "You

certainly can!"

They filled the room as chairs from nearby tables were shoved in our direction. Once my new found trio of confidantes were seated, I quickly looked about to see if the coast was clear and offered the following in a whisper. "Ladies, I'm very sorry to inform you that we didn't actually find a flying saucer in the pond today. But, back at the UFO Report and Information Center in Philadelphia, I have a very large mayonnaise jar containing the body of a little alien that we took from a downed scout ship." Mike reeled back in his seat and let out a moaning, "Ohhh, Nooo!" that swiftly turned into contagious laughter. With that we paid the check and were unceremoniously escorted out of the establishment.

That was the last time I saw Carbondale. My friend Mike and I were planning to return in November 2004, but he passed away quite suddenly in October 2003 and I'm certainly going to miss him a great deal. However, my sweet wife, "Amazing Grace" (who has miraculously managed to endure my "saucering" for 34 years) and I plan to return to the fair city when, and if, the festivities for the 30th anniversary celebration of the UFO crash are scheduled (rumours on the Internet say that the fest is in the planning stages). It would be nice to see Carbondale become a profitable UFO tourist attraction, like the towns of Roswell and Aztec, New Mexico. Who knows, maybe I'll buy a souvenir T-shirt for my grandson.

But I hope the promoters of the "Carbondale Saucer Fest" will be wise enough to hold the bash in June or July when warm-blooded visitors from this planet can dress up in weird space creature costumes and frolic in the sun at Russell Park, where "The Earth Stood Still ", if only for a few hours back in November of 1974. If you too should plan to attend the gala, just follow the crowds to the place in the park where an old crazy guy is showing off a big ole' mayonnaise jar with something in it. Just walk right up to him, extend a friendly tentacle and say, "Greetings Earthling, how much for a peek at the thing in the jar?"

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